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ABSTRACT

This paper recounts the modification of a specific communication context, teacher evaluation, to produce improved instruction and better teacher-supervisor relationships. Dissatisfied with a checklist-based evaluation system considered moribund by many, a committee of teachers, administrators, and educational professionals at Anchorage (Alaska) School District examined current evaluation systems and developed a cooperative system stressing joint goal-setting and a specified series of teacher-supervisor conferences and classroom observations. The new system's phased, three-year implementation process allowed examination of teacher-supervisor relationships and instructional innovation under three supervision modes: supervisor-controlled, cooperative, and minimal supervision. Surveys of supervisors and teachers show substantial support for the cooperative evaluation model. The Survey of Supervisory Practices Form and district-developed instruments were used to assess and contrast the three evaluation conditions. The cooperative approach proved superior, as it permitted greater experimentation with educational innovation and the adoption of more innovative practices in the classroom. Another result was improved teacher-supervisor relations, shown by more positive communications and teacher perceptions of supervisor competency. Included are 2 tables, a bibliography of 39 references, and 2 appendices illustrating the supervisor-directed and cooperative evaluation forms. (MLH)

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**IMPROVING
TEACHER - SUPERVISOR
COMMUNICATION
THROUGH
MODIFICATION OF THE COMMUNICATION
CONTEXT:**

**AN EXAMINATION OF THE EFFECTS OF
COOPERATIVE, SUPERVISOR CONTROLLED AND MINIMAL
EVALUATION ON INSTRUCTION AND THE
TEACHER - SUPERVISOR RELATIONSHIP**

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ABSTRACT

This paper recounts the modification of a specific communication context, teacher evaluation, to produce improved instruction and better teacher - supervisor relationships. The process of implementation allowed comparison of the effects of three types of evaluation. It was found that the modification of the evaluation process to one which required cooperation and focused on the improvement of instruction resulted in educational innovation and improved teacher -supervisor relationships.

The Anchorage School District was dissatisfied with a checklist based evaluation system which many teachers and administrators felt was moribund. A committee of teachers, administrators, and educational professionals examined current systems of evaluation and developed a cooperative evaluation system based on joint goal setting and a specified series of teacher - supervisor conferences and classroom observations.

The phased implementation of the new system allowed an examination of teacher-supervisor relationships and instructional innovation under three types of supervision: supervisor controlled, cooperative, and minimal. It was found that the cooperative evaluation approach was superior. Cooperative evaluation resulted in more experimentation with educational innovation and the adoption of more successful innovations in the classroom. The cooperative evaluation also resulted in improved teacher - supervisor relationships with more positive characterizations of supervisor - teacher communication and a perception on the part of teachers that supervisors were more competent.

The modification of the communication context through the revision of a system of teacher evaluation was a clear success. The paper demonstrates that the modification of the communication context can have a positive effect on personal relationships and result in the accomplishment of institutional goals.

HOW CAN THE PROCESS OF TEACHER EVALUATION BE CHANGED TO IMPROVE INSTRUCTION AND TO STRENGTHEN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS AND THEIR SUPERVISORS?

Introduction

This paper reports the manipulation of the relationship between teachers and supervisors to improve instruction. Evaluation was identified as a critical communication context which effects all teachers and supervisors. Evaluation of teachers is required by law or regulation in all states in the United States and is an important element in the personal relationship which exists between teachers and their supervisors.

Good evaluation practices have the potential to encourage teachers to improve their instructional skills. Bad evaluation practices have the potential for alienating and demoralizing both teachers and their supervisors.

The development and implementation of a cooperative and goal driven evaluation system provides a demonstration of how the modification of the communication context can effect instructional behavior and the relationship between teachers and their supervisors.

The Problem

The search for an improved system of evaluation grew out of a feeling that the approach which had been in place for more than a dozen years in the Anchorage School District had become a mere formality. The completion of a 12 item evaluation check list provided an occasion when a supervisor could give a teacher a little praise and recognition for a year of good work. At worst, it resulted in a demonstration of the authority of the principal at the cost of alienating the teacher without any useful improvement of instruction. It was felt by many that the evaluation process should provide an opportunity to improve instruction and strengthen the personal relationship between teachers and their supervisors.

Every year each teacher in the school district was subjected to an evaluation as required by state law. Each supervisor was required to complete a checklist evaluation to fulfill this obligation. Teachers were rated on 12 items as exceptional, proficient, or in need of improvement (Attachment A). Experienced principals often would add a page or so of positive comments to provide some elaboration of the undefined items on the checklist or to give some praise for special efforts and activities not covered by the form.

Prior to forwarding the completed evaluation to the district personnel office, the principal was required to have the teacher sign the form as an acknowledgement of the evaluation. If the teacher disagreed with the assessment, the teacher was given the opportunity to write a statement for inclusion in the personnel file. Many principals would hold a brief end-of-year evaluation conferences with teachers but some would just put the completed checklist in the teacher's mailbox in the school office with a note asking that the form be signed and returned to the principal for forwarding to the personnel office.

In cases where the teacher was rated as being in need of improvement, principals were told to provide the teacher with the assistance necessary to develop a plan for improvement. However, no provision was made for any support, no specification was made as to what assistance should be provided, and no further assessment of performance or reporting procedures were specified. The entire effort for the improvement of instruction through the evaluation process was stated in the admonition to develop a plan for improvement. It was only in cases where a teacher was identified as a potential case for dismissal that principals were encouraged to document the

performance of the teacher, to closely monitor the behavior of teachers, and to make regular and repeated observations of activities in the classroom.

Teachers were dissatisfied with the system because they felt that they were not being evaluated on their activities related to teaching. Many teachers also felt that the check list items were not defined and not appropriate for a professional evaluation. Supervisors were dissatisfied with the system because they felt the sterile checklist provided them with little opportunity for acting as leaders who could have a positive effect on instruction. Both felt that the evaluation process was a communication context where there was a substantial opportunity for conflict and personal dissatisfaction and a minimal opportunity for interpersonal support and professional development.

The Solution

The assistant superintendent for instruction was charged with exploring how evaluation might be improved. He and one of the district staff assigned to staff development sought volunteers from a cross section of principals, teachers, and other professional staff to explore alternative evaluation systems and produce a new approach to evaluation for the district. Elementary and secondary teachers composed more than half of the thirty person group. The remainder included an educational researcher, a special education supervisor, a representative of the principal's union, the head of the teacher's union, the staff development specialist, and a member of the personnel department.

After an initial venting of negative feelings about the check list evaluation system a consensus quickly developed that a much better system was possible. After a year of considering such varied topics as clinical supervision, collegial supervision, peer supervision, developmental supervision, supervision cycles, accountability, models of teaching, and the various factors that had been reported by McGreal (1983) and others to effect successful evaluation, a feeling emerged that good evaluation was based on a positive, trusting, communicative relationship between a supervisor and the teacher who were involved with each other in working toward the common goal of improved instruction.

The process of evaluation was thought to be less important than the outcome of developing a supportive relationship where a teacher and supervisor would work together to improve the quality of instruction. However, the process was identified as the context which could bring together the teacher and supervisor into a positive and cooperative relationship. The development of a systematic process became a major effort for the committee.

The system which evolved as the format for evaluations was not specifically modeled on any one evaluation system which had been reviewed by the committee but included some of the characteristics of successful supervision, McGreal (1983), with an emphasis on purposeful and goal directed interaction targeted on instructional activities.

The check list approach was done away with by the committee in favor of a specified series of conferences and observations. The heart of the new system was that evaluation would be limited to a cooperative effort to assess the progress of the teacher toward fulfillment of some instructional goal. So long as the general performance of the teacher was not deficient, evaluation would take place relative to a goal or goals specified jointly by the teacher and the principal.

The usual course of the new annual evaluation would be a goal setting conference or conferences early in the year which would result in a written goal statement prepared by the teacher and accepted by the principal. The teacher would then work toward the goal with the principal providing assistance and support. During the course of the year, the principal would make at

least three observations of the teacher at least two of which would be jointly planned. The usual sequence for an observation would be a meeting prior to the observation to discuss the instructional activity the teacher planned and the type of observation and record keeping which would be done by the supervisor. This meeting would be followed by the observation and a debriefing conference where the principal would report what was observed and a joint assessment of the instructional effort would be made. Toward the end of the school year, the principal and teacher would get together to assess the progress made toward the goal or goals specified at the start of the year. The product of this final conference or conferences was specified. It was a joint statement which would be forwarded to the personnel office assessing the progress made in fulfilling the goal established at the start of the year.

The chief obstacles to the plan were identified as the cost in time for teachers and supervisors and the inexperience of supervisors in cooperative goal setting and evaluation methods. The checklist system had usually resulted in no more than two or three brief meetings or observations, usually at the convenience and under the direction of the principal. The new system required one or more lengthy conferences for goal setting and the end of year appraisal as well as time consuming conference and observation sequences. In most cases it was expected that the scheduling of the evaluation activities would be cooperative with planning and goal setting sessions being a product of mutual agreement.

The First Test (1984-1985)

An initial test of the cooperative evaluation approach was made with a dozen volunteer supervisors who each asked a few tenured teachers to participate. Supervisors kept time logs and observation records. An evaluator experienced in collaborative assessment was asked to review the system and meet with the volunteers prior to the test of the process and after the completion of all evaluations. Structured interviews were conducted with supervisors and teachers to probe the fairness of the system, the efficacy of the system, and attitudes of the participants toward cooperative, goal oriented evaluation.

All indications were positive. Teachers and principals felt the approach resulted in better performance in the classroom by teachers, a more collegial relationship between teachers and supervisors, and some instructional innovation on the part of teachers who were encouraged to try new content and instructional techniques. Both teachers and principals reported that they had spent about twice as much time involved in evaluation under the cooperative model. This estimated time involvement was substantiated by the time logs kept by supervisors.

The one major caution of the outside evaluator was that the 1984-85 year long test had been done under the best of conditions. The principals and volunteers were experienced staff who felt little or no threat from the evaluation process. There was an understanding that this might be a one time experiment where failure would be attributed to the system rather than the individual. The evaluator characterized it as success in a "green house" (Goldsberry, 1985).

A Trial Implementation (1985-1986)

The school board approved the trial implementation of the new process in all district schools for 1985-86. Principals were admonished to start the process of conferences and observations early in the year and to allow enough time with each teacher to give the new evaluation process a chance to work.

A set of formal directions and forms were prepared for support of the cooperative evaluation method (Attachment B). The directions included the specific requirement that at least one goal be related to observable instructional behavior which could serve as a basis for conferences and observations. A form which might be used for recording observations was developed at the

request of some principals. A set of "instructional competencies" was developed as a guide for areas of potential improvement goals. And, the semantics of the directions were discussed until time required that the package be prepared and distributed.

The time problem was ameliorated for supervisors through the acceptance of an evaluation sequence where tenured teachers, more than 80% of the teaching staff, would be formally evaluated only every other year. Tenured teachers who were not being formally evaluated would have a less focused evaluation without formal goal setting and with observation to only take place as needed. This minimal evaluation required only that the principal make a statement at the end of the year that the performance of the teacher had been satisfactory and to indicate the basis for that judgement in order to fulfill the minimum state reporting requirements.

The success of the small scale test led to an implementation in 1985-86 in more than 100 schools with approximately 225 administrators and 2400 teachers. Administrators and staff members were given training in the evaluation system at the start of the school year. Participants from the small scale test, members of the committee which developed the evaluation system, and other teachers and principals who had been initiated into the system participated in introducing the model. Principals were provided with the opportunity to participate in advanced training sessions on goal setting, conducting conferences, and methods of classroom observation. Short in-services were held on goal setting, observation methods, and record keeping for teachers at most schools.

For the first year of full district-wide implementation of cooperative evaluation, principals were required to use the cooperative approach with a minimum of 5 teachers and to allow a corresponding number of teachers to participate in a minimal evaluation. This resulted in teachers being evaluated with the older supervisor controlled check list and minimal observation system, the new goal setting, conference - observation, and cooperative assessment system, or the minimal evaluation system with no required conferences or observation.

The comparison of the effects of the three approaches to evaluation was based on the responses of teachers and principals to questionnaires concerning their experience. District program evaluation staff also made regular visits to schools and met with teachers and principals for discussions of the evaluation process. A sample of teachers were asked to complete the Survey of Supervisory Practices developed by Lee Goldsberry, Paulette Harvey, and Nancy E. Hoffman (1984) for their research on supervision and the relationship between supervision and teachers perception of their supervisors.

What is the effect of evaluation in a cooperative communication context?

The implementation of the cooperative evaluation system provided an opportunity for the comparison of three very different evaluation contexts. The new cooperative goal setting model was to be used in all schools with some teachers. A minimal evaluation without required observation or goal setting was to be used in all schools with some tenured teachers. A check list rating system was to be used with some teachers in most schools. This allowed the comparison of the effects of the cooperative system which called for relatively high levels of interaction and cooperation with a supervisor oriented check list system and a minimal evaluation without specified criteria or activities.

Since the participants had some control over the evaluation in which they participated, there must be some caution in the interpretation of the findings. Conversations with principals and teachers suggested that principals and supervisors tended to use the cooperative evaluation with teachers whom they felt needed the most supervision and the minimal evaluation with tenured teachers who had proven their ability. There were also teachers who were less than trustful of a new evaluation system and opted for the older supervisor directed evaluation with which they

were familiar. However, there was a generally positive feeling about the new system as it was being introduced and very few of the teachers or principals voiced substantial concerns or reservations during the course of the year.

A brief district questionnaire and the Survey of Supervisory Practices Teacher's Form were sent in May of 1986 to a sample of 1,000 teachers. Usable returns came from 512 teachers or 51% of the sample. The district questionnaire asked teachers which type of evaluation they experienced and if they considered their evaluation to have been fair. More than 92% of those reporting each type of evaluation felt that their own evaluation had been fair. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used in the analysis of all survey data (SPSSX, 1983).

Among other things, the Survey of Supervisory Practices asks teachers to select from a list of adjectives those terms which they felt characterized the supervision which they received during the school year. Many of the terms directly relate to the quality of the communication between the supervisor and teacher within the evaluation context. Examination of the pattern of responses for the teachers under each of the three evaluation conditions suggests that there were some notable differences in the relationship between teachers and supervisors as a result of manipulating the communication context.

Table 1 indicates the frequency with which teachers participating in cooperative evaluation, supervisor directed evaluation, and minimal evaluation selected the various adjectives. Each descriptor is listed, the total number of teachers selecting the descriptor is indicated, and the percent selecting the descriptor from each of the three groups is indicated. The pattern of responses is consistent with the comments made by teachers when they were interviewed by evaluators during the year.

Table 1
Effect of Cooperative Evaluation
Teacher Assessment
1985-86

Descriptor	Rank	Total Selecting N = 421	Percent Selecting Checklist N = 54	Percent Selecting Cooperative N = 294	Percent Selecting Minimal N = 173
Supportive	1	406	87.0	79.3	72.8
Encouraging	2	330	64.8	69.0	53.2
Constructive	3	316	64.8	68.4	46.2
Meaningful	4	268	50.0	58.5	39.9
Collaborative	5	260	38.9	57.5	40.5
Productive	6	259	44.4	57.8	37.6
Organized	7	232	33.3	50.0	38.7
Continuous	8	229	40.7	47.6	38.7
Rational	9	198	27.8	40.8	36.4
Systematic	10	153	25.9	35.4	20.2
Stimulating	11	127	27.8	27.9	17.7
Directive	12	125	29.6	27.6	16.2
Uniform	13	104	18.5	20.7	19.1
Varied	14	91	16.7	17.0	18.5
Sporadic	15	78	13.0	15.0	15.6
Intuitive	16	68	18.5	13.6	10.4
Disorganized	17	45	5.6	7.8	11.0
Useless	18	44	7.4	6.8	11.6
Arbitrary	19	41	9.3	6.8	9.2
Trivial	20	40	5.6	8.2	7.5
Discouraging	21	37	5.6	7.5	6.9
Threatening	22	30	5.6	6.1	1.7
Boring	23	19	1.9	4.4	2.9
Destructive	24	13	1.9	2.4	2.9

Some of the descriptors seem to stand out as more important for all three of the groups as reflecting the positive aspects of the evaluation process. Those that differentiate the cooperative, minimal, and check list approaches generally favor the cooperative approach. It was more often identified as organized, productive, systematic, and collaborative. The supervisor directed approach was chosen by a larger proportion of that group as supportive. The minimal evaluation approach without specified goals, conferences, or observations had fewer descriptors chosen and in no case had a larger positive proportion than either one of the other two approaches.

The teachers were asked to indicate which of the descriptors was most important to them in their characterization of the evaluation they had received. The descriptor identified as the best descriptor of all three types of evaluation was *supportive*. Supportive was selected as best by 42% of those evaluated under the supervisor directed evaluation, 24% of those participating in collaborative evaluations, and 21% of those receiving minimal evaluations. The second most often selected important descriptor was *collaborative* which was selected by 6% of the teachers under the supervisor directed system, 25% participating in collaborative evaluations, and 12%

of those with minimal evaluations. When asked which descriptors would best describe evaluation as the teachers would like it to be, the most often chosen descriptors were supportive, meaningful, and constructive.

Other Survey of Supervisory Practices items revealed interesting differences. Cooperative evaluation context teachers were more likely to see the purpose of evaluation as "to assist me to improve my teaching, 51%, than those in the supervisor directed or minimal evaluations who most often selected the response "to comply with legal requirements that I be observed." Cooperative evaluation teachers were more likely to initiate observations by asking their supervisors to schedule an observation, 45%, as opposed to minimal, 22%, or supervisor directed teachers, 29%. Teachers who had the supervisor directed evaluations were much more likely to report that the supervisor was unaware of the purpose of the lesson observed, 58%, than either the cooperative evaluation, 13%, or the minimal evaluation, 40%, teachers.

There was a notable difference in the groups related to the relation of the evaluation process to the exploration of instructional innovations in the classroom. The teachers reported that the supervisor identified possible changes in instruction or that the teacher and supervisor jointly came up with innovations for 64% of the cooperative evaluation group as opposed to 44% of the supervisor directed evaluation group and 51% of the minimal evaluation group. Changes in instruction which were discussed with supervisors were tried out and found worthwhile by 62% of the cooperative group, 40% of the supervisor directed group, and 41% of the minimal evaluation group.

Table 2 presents the responses of teachers to a series of items related to the perceived behavior of the supervisor during the evaluation process. Many of the items reflect the feelings of the teacher about the supervisor which grow out of the interaction within the context of the evaluation process. The specific items all relate to factors which have been found to be important in successful supervision.

Examination of Table 2 shows that there are significant differences among the three systems even though the average responses of teachers do not differ greatly. Generally, the most positive responses are from the teachers who participated in the cooperative system and the least positive responses are from the teachers who had minimal evaluation. Teachers participating in the cooperative model on the average found their supervisors to be more helpful, to give clearer comments, to be more helpful to their personal growth and to be most interested in the achievement of students. Teachers under the older check list evaluation system found their supervisors to be the least helpful, the least likely to encourage innovation, and less likely to encourage their personal growth. The most serious question which may be raised by the table is about the effects of the minimal evaluation condition where the averages showed that the group, not surprisingly, found supervisors to have less knowledge of their goals, their student's achievement, and to be generally less helpful to the teacher's professional growth and development.

Table 2
Effect of Cooperative Evaluation
Teacher Assessment of Supervisor
1985-1986

Question	Average Old Sys. N = 48	Average New Sys. N = 287	Average Minimal N = 155	F	Significance
Supervisor was knowledgeable.	1.97*	1.78	1.85	1.026	.359
Supervisor had a grasp of my goals.	1.91	1.70	1.98	5.059	.007
Supervisor was <u>not</u> helpful to me.	4.02	4.24	3.96	3.800	.023
Supervisor got me to think about new methods.	2.64	2.35	2.56	3.656	.027
Supervisor did <u>not</u> observe me enough to make a good judgement.	3.25	3.80	3.19	13.625	.000
Supervisor helped me to grow as a professional.	2.83	2.71	2.79	.423	.655
Supervisor monitored my student's achievement.	2.87	2.70	2.82	.883	.413
Supervisor emphasized my student's achievement.	2.51	2.48	2.85	5.695	.003
Supervisor did <u>not</u> make clear comments on my evaluation.	3.91	4.02	3.75	3.288	.038
Supervisor did <u>not</u> identify specific areas of weakness on my evaluation.	3.62	3.70	3.62	.332	.717
Supervisor did give me helpful comments.	2.52	2.42	2.67	1.618	.201
Supervision was helpful to me as a teacher.	2.40	2.26	2.67	7.501	.001
In-services were <u>not</u> related to evaluation.	3.06	3.41	3.14	4.390	.012
I welcome observations by other teachers.	2.02	1.69	1.88	4.284	.014

*Five point scale with one (1) indicating strong agreement and 5 indicating strong disagreement.

If the items in Table 2 which are related to communication behavior of the supervisor are treated as an scale reflecting the overall response of a teacher to supervision and the negative items are reversed so that a negative response on a negative item, i.e. a positive response to the concept, is converted from a 5 to a 1, the average on the scale may be taken as an indication of a general response of a teacher toward supervision. The overall average for teachers who participated in cooperative evaluations is 1.96. The averages for those in supervisor directed evaluations and minimal evaluations are 2.18 and 2.15 respectively. This shows that under all three conditions there is an overall positive reaction to supervision though the differences are large enough to be statistically significant ($F = 8.345$, d.f. = 3, $p < .000$). This is a clear indication that the manipulation of the context within which the supervision takes place has a positive effect on the supervisory communication behavior as seen by the teacher.

Final Implementation (1986-1987)

The following year teachers and principals were not given the option of selecting the supervisor directed evaluation approach. All evaluations were to be either cooperative or minimal. Non-tenured teachers and teachers who had minimal evaluations in 1985-86 participated in cooperative evaluations. Tenured teachers who had supervisor directed evaluations had either minimal or cooperative evaluations and those who had cooperative evaluations had minimal evaluations in 1986-87. In May of 1987 a sample of 500 teachers were sent a questionnaire concerning evaluation. Usable questionnaires were returned by 248 teachers, 49% of those surveyed. One hundred and forty-one surveys were returned by teachers who participated in cooperative evaluations, 57% of the return, and 101 were returned by teachers who participated in minimal evaluations.

This questionnaire focused on differences in the two types of evaluation, cooperative and minimal, and showed some notable differences. Most of those participating in cooperative evaluations reported three or more conferences with supervisors, 77%, and three or more classroom observations by supervisors, 66%, as opposed to 64% of the minimal evaluation teachers reporting two or fewer observations and 74% reporting two or fewer conferences with supervisors. Seventy six percent, 76%, of the group with cooperative evaluations and 60% of the minimal evaluation groups reported that they had tried new teaching methods. Sixty five percent of the cooperative group and 54% of the minimal group felt that they had made worthwhile changes in their teaching. Ninety one percent, 91 %, of the cooperative group felt that their evaluations had been fair and accurate and another 4% felt that their evaluations were overly positive. This compares with 89% of the minimal group who felt their evaluations were fair and accurate and another 1% which felt their evaluation to be overly positive.

Again, the cooperative evaluation was found to be the more positive choice. However, it was evident that supervisors had not given up on the evaluation of the minimal evaluation group. Substantial numbers of teachers who had participated in minimal evaluations were reporting an amount of evaluation contact which was close to that under the supervisor directed. evaluation reported during the prior year.

A questionnaire was sent to a sample of 50 supervisors with a series of questions about their reaction to the cooperative and minimal appraisal alternatives for 1986-87. Questionnaires were returned by 47 supervisors, 94 % of the sample. The supervisors included 4 senior high school principals, 9 junior high school principals, and 33 junior high school principals. The average principal supervised a staff of 44 and reported 10 to 15 cooperative and another 10 to 15 minimal evaluations for the year.

Principals reported fewer observations than teachers with 2 or 3 observations for 98% of the cooperative evaluations and 1 observation for 63% of the minimal evaluations. Principals

estimated that 75% of the observations for cooperative evaluations were 45 minutes or more and 77% of the minimal observations were 30 minutes or less. A final evaluation conference time of less than 30 minutes was reported by 53% of the cooperative evaluation group and 82% of the minimal evaluation group. This indicated that the perceptions and minimal evaluation condition teachers differed somewhat about the amount of supervision which principals thought was taking place.

Principals and other supervisors were asked to rate the overall system. It was rated as excellent by 23% of the supervisors, good by 47% of the supervisors, fair by 12 % of the supervisors, and poor by 4% of the supervisors. A follow up open ended question showed that those who were most positive about the system liked it because they felt it improved their ability to influence instruction. Many supervisors also reported that they enjoyed the collegial role they were encouraged to play in improving instruction. Those who rated the system as fair or poor indicated that they felt there was not enough time for cooperative evaluations, that all teachers should be fully evaluated each year, that there should be some rating system based on specific items, or that it was unrealistic to expect principals to be knowledgeable enough of instructional methods across grades and subjects to play a useful role in instructional improvement.

Three years of trial and development had provided ample evidence that the cooperative approach to evaluation was preferred by most of the supervisors and teachers. Survey results and interviews provided ample support for the cooperative approach in spite of the increased time commitment reported by principals and a continuing concern for the evaluation of teachers on a regular basis. However, the results did not fully reflect the positive nature of comments made by teachers and supervisors about the system. Even those who were negative about the system as implemented were most likely identify a desire for an elaboration of the cooperative system rather than a return to the basic proficiency check list approach.

Conclusion

This paper examined the implementation of a substantial change in a critical communication context. The institution of a cooperative system of evaluation developed by a school district to be used by supervisors and teachers resulted in a significant increase in instructional innovation by teachers and an improved teacher supervisor relationship.

The cooperative system is based on the development of a communication context where supervisors and teachers jointly set goals for the improvement of instruction and work together to reach the goals. The teacher is the primary initiator in setting goals and the supervisor provides encouragement and monitors progress toward the goals through a series of observations and conferences. At the end of the year, the supervisor and teacher meet together to produce a joint assessment of the success the teacher has had in meeting the goals set at the first of the year.

This was a radical departure from the supervisor directed evaluation context which was replaced. Under this old model supervisors completed a 12 item checklist rating of teachers performance as acceptable or in need of improvement. Teachers complained that the old system was not related to instruction and did not fairly reflect their ability as a teacher. Supervisors were dissatisfied with the system because they felt the sterile check list provided them with little opportunity for acting as leaders who might have a positive effect on instruction through the encouragement of teachers instructional activities.

A group of teachers, supervisors, administrators, and other educational professionals developed a new cooperative system. An initial trial implementation by 12 supervisors with a few

volunteer teachers showed that the cooperative approach was workable under ideal conditions but that the required contacts approximately doubled the time required to complete evaluations.

A revised system was implemented in over 100 schools by approximately 225 administrators working with about 2400 teachers in 1985-86. Some teachers had cooperative evaluations and some participated in the old supervisor directed model. The increased time required by the cooperative evaluation was gained by allowing tenured staff to be evaluated with the cooperative evaluation one year and a minimal evaluation which did not require either goal setting or observation the following year. This made possible the comparison of three models of evaluation: cooperative, supervisor directed, and minimal.

The results favor cooperative evaluation. Surveys of supervisors and teachers show substantial support for the cooperative evaluation model. The Survey of Supervisory Practices Teacher's Form (Goldsberry, Harvey, and Hoffman, 1984) as well as district developed instruments were used to assess and contrast the three conditions of evaluation. Complete implementation of the cooperative evaluation model was further supported by the responses of teachers and supervisors at the end of the 1986-87 school year.

Supervisors and teachers favored the cooperative evaluation mode and reported that it resulted in increased instructional innovation on the part of teachers. Teachers who participated in cooperative evaluations were more likely to describe their evaluation as organized, productive, systematic, and collaborative than teachers who participated in either supervisor directed or minimal evaluations. However, teachers who participated in the supervisor directed evaluation process were more likely to characterize their evaluation as supportive.

Teachers felt that supervisors who they had worked with in cooperative evaluations were more likely participate in the evaluation process because of a desire to help improve teaching than to simply fulfill a legal requirement. This was reflected by other survey items which showed that more teachers and principals in the cooperative relationship came up with instructional innovations and that they more often successfully implemented those innovations than the teachers who participated in either minimal or supervisor directed evaluations.

Teachers in the cooperative relationship were more likely to feel that their supervisor was knowledgeable about their goals, were more helpful, made enough observations to make a good judgement of instruction, and placed a greater emphasis on student achievement. When the average ratings of teachers of the practices of their supervisor in 12 areas were compared, the ratings of those who had participated in cooperative evaluations were the highest.

The manipulation of the communication context to produce a more cooperative and goal oriented evaluation process resulted in positive outcomes for the participants and for the institution. The institutional goal of improved instruction was achieved through the encouragement of innovation and the adoption of new instructional practices. The reports of both supervisors and teachers indicated improved interpersonal relationships.

There is no guarantee that the contextual change imposed through the modification of the evaluation process will result in an ongoing cycle of improvement that will go on through the years. However, it is expected that the change will be ongoing since the context is defined by the specified evaluation process and individuals should find improved interpersonal relations and more effective instruction personally rewarding therefore self reinforcing.

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APPENDIX A

THE SUPERVISOR DIRECTED EVALUATION FORM

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

TEACHER EVALUATION FORM

Teacher_____

School_____

Assignment_____

Tenure_____

Non-Tenure_____

It is the philosophy of the Anchorage School District that all employees -- even the best employees -- can improve performance, and it is the primary goal of the professional evaluation to assist in improving performance generally and the level of instruction in particular. Therefore, a "plan for improvement" notation in one or more areas of the evaluation form does not necessarily indicate unsatisfactory performance.

Note: Similarly, area(s) of exceptionality will be narratively reported below.

	Plan for Improvement	Continued Development Encouraged	
		Proficient	Exceptional
1. AREAS OF INSTRUCTIONAL COMPETENCY			
A. Knowledge of Subject	()	()	()
B. Diagnostic & Prescriptive Assessment	()	()	()
C. Learning Environment	()	()	()
D. Instructional Methods and Planning	()	()	()
E. Motivation of Students	()	()	()
F. Classroom Social Interaction	()	()	()
G. Evaluation of Student Performance	()	()	()
H. Student Decorum	()	()	()
2. OTHER PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS			
A. Interpersonal Relations	()	()	()
B. Non-Instructional Duties and Responsibilities	()	()	()
C. Curriculum and Non-Curricular Activities	()	()	()
D. Professional Growth	()	()	()

APPENDIX B

**THE COOPERATIVE EVALUATION DIRECTIONS
AND EVALUATION REPORT FORM**

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

TEACHER APPRAISAL SYSTEM

Appraisal Philosophy

The parents, School Board members and staff of the Anchorage School District are committed to the continuation and improvement of the District's strong educational program. An effective teacher appraisal system that focuses on the improvement of instruction is an essential component of this instructional program.

While the primary focus of evaluation is to improve instruction, teacher appraisal encourages teachers to meet the established performance expectations. Performance expectations should be established by principals and their staffs prior to the appraisal process. The appraisal process needs to be continuous and constructive and needs to take place in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. The process is a cooperative effort on the part of supervisors and teachers. It is designed to encourage productive dialogue between staff and supervisors and to promote professional growth and development.

Procedural Guidelines

The Anchorage Teacher Appraisal System will be made up of two related but separate parts.

- A. A major part of the appraisal system should focus on instruction and improved student learning. The supervisor and staff member share the responsibility for the completion of this part of the appraisal procedure. Four specific activities are included in this part of the appraisal:
 - 1) The collaborative development of specific teaching or job related goals and plans of action for achieving the goals is necessary. Areas of focus may be drawn from competencies as outlined in Appendix D.
 - 2) The teachers shall be given an opportunity to provide a self-evaluation of their work and are encouraged to do so.
 - 3) The plan is implemented by the teacher with the supervisor's assistance.
 - 4) An evaluation by the supervisor of the progress achieved on the goals is to be completed.

- B. An integral part of a teachers employment in the School District is an on-going and continuous appraisal of the staff member's ability to meet general professional responsibilities (see Final Teacher Appraisal Form, Appendix A, Part I). The appraisal of these professional responsibilities will typically be made through a supervisor's routine contact, informal observations, and interaction with the staff member.

If problems occur, the staff member will be contacted by the supervisor to remind the staff member of minimum expectations in the problem area and to provide whatever assistance might be helpful.

If the problem continues or reoccurs, the supervisor, at his or her discretion, may prepare and issue to the staff member a written notice setting forth the specific deficiency with specific recommendations for improvement with a copy to the teacher's personnel file.

In the unlikely event that serious, intentional, or flagrant violations of the general professional responsibilities occur, the supervisor, at his or her discretion, may put aside the recommended procedure and make a direct recommendation for more formal and immediate action.

Procedures

1. Appraisal of General Professional Responsibilities

- A. All tenured and non-tenured staff will be evaluated on the professional responsibilities as outlined in the Final Teacher Appraisal Form (see Appendix A, Part I) on an annual basis. Evaluation of professional responsibilities will be completed by February 15 for non-tenured, certificated personnel and by May 15 for tenured, certificated personnel.

2. Appraisal of Instruction

- A. All non-tenured staff will be involved in the focused instructional improvement process (see Appendix A, Parts I and II) each year which shall be completed by February 15.
- B. All tenured staff will be involved in the focused instructional improvement process on alternate years (see Appendix A, Part II). This appraisal will be completed by May 15. Participation will be determined by the supervisor. Staff members will be informed by October 1 of the intent to provide focused instructional appraisal; however, an evaluation may occur at a later date, if warranted. Staff members may request an instructional appraisal in any given year. The supervisor may choose to continue this instructional appraisal process for a selected staff member from one year to the next. The supervisor is encouraged to limit these evaluations to fourteen or less staff members in a given year.

- C. The focused instructional improvement process should be initiated as early in the year as possible, preferably by October 15. The basic components of this process include:

1) Orientation

- a. General orientation to the teacher appraisal system for all teaching and administrative staff
- b. Individual follow-up orientation for evaluatees

2) Process

- a. Establish goals (see Appendix E) and a plan of action for achieving the goals -- preferably before October 15 (see Appendix A, Part II).
 1. Determine methods for collecting data relative to the goals
 2. Provide written description of the goal setting conference
- b. Frequent formal classroom observations should occur throughout the school year. These observations should occur at different times of the year and the day. Records of the interactions and contact between supervisor and staff member should be kept.
 1. A pre-observation conference is recommended for each formal classroom observation to help the teacher and supervisor determine the primary focus of the observation. At least one pre-observation conference prior to an observation will be required during the appraisal period. (For suggested questions see Appendix B.)
 2. At least two formal classroom observations will occur during the appraisal period. At least one observation should be by teacher invitation and at least one observation will include the review of an entire instructional lesson/period. (See Appendix C).
 3. Feedback, written and verbal, should occur within one to five working days after each formal observation. On at least two occasions this feedback will take the form of a post observation conference. Information determined in the observation and pre-observation conference will form the basis of discussion in the post conference.

c. Portfolio

Teachers, if they wish, are encouraged to provide as optional and supplementary, a portfolio of favorite and/or exemplary unit plans, lesson plans, tests, quizzes, study guides, homework assignments, etc. Teachers are also encouraged to include student, peer and parent feedback. Portions of this portfolio may, by mutual agreement, be referred to or included in the appraisal report.

3) Final Appraisal Conference

The final appraisal conference must be held by the end of the appraisal period (second week in February for non-tenured staff and the second week in May for tenured staff). It is the concluding activity in the formal appraisal process, and should be a time when the supervisor and the staff member discuss and analyze Appendix A, Parts I and II of the final teacher appraisal activity. The highlight of the conference should be the joint discussion of the year's activities, and the implications for future goal setting and continued self growth. The written summary should be done during the conference or immediately afterward. The summary should be a clear reflection of the discussion during the conference and must be shared with the staff member for his/her signature and optional comments.

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INSTRUCTIONAL PRE-OBSERVATION CONFERENCE

Purpose

A pre-observation conference is recommended for each formal classroom observation. The purpose is to provide the teacher and the supervisor an opportunity to review the teacher's instructional plan for the scheduled observations. The teacher and supervisor will determine the primary focus of the observation and review the procedures the supervisor will use while observing. The pre-observation conference should also be used to establish feedback mechanisms that will occur during the post-observation conference. The pre-observation conference should occur from 1 - 3 days before the formal observation.

Points to consider during the conference:

Several instructional points should be reviewed during the conference. These might include the following:

- What are the lesson objectives? What should the students know or be able to do after the lesson?
- Where is the teacher in the course and how does the lesson fit District Scope and Sequence?
- What methods will the teachers utilize to present the lesson? What kind of activities will the student be asked to do?
- How will the teacher know if the students have learned the new concept or skill?
- Are there particular items within the lesson that the supervisor should examine more carefully, i.e. time on task, clarity of input, equality of questioning, etc.?

TEACHER COMPETENCIES

The following statements are desired characteristics for teachers in the Anchorage School District. THE LIST OF COMPETENCIES ARE NOT TO BE USED AS A CHECKLIST OF REQUIRED PRACTICES. Selected items under each category may be utilized to assist the supervisor and staff member in selecting appropriate target goals.

Diagnosis/Evaluation of Students

Keeps accurate and adequate records of student progress.
Effectively communicates student progress (positive or negative) to students, parents and appropriate administrators.
Utilizes appropriate evaluation techniques.
Diagnoses students and provides for individual differences.
Recognizes developmental levels of students.

Planning

Plans all student contact time.
Identifies long range goals.
Designs clear logical lessons to achieve long range goals.
Sets appropriate learning expectations and standards.

Instruction

States the objective of the lesson.
Relates the lesson to what has come before and to what will follow.
States how the learning is of practical use for the student.
Focuses student attention for learning.
Motivates students for learning.
Clearly presents information to the learner.
Correctly models the learning.
Uses multiple examples and/or non-examples.
Uses questioning strategies that promote learning.
Checks for learner understanding.
Maximizes teaching & learning time.
Incorporates a variety of methods and materials to assist the many learning styles of students.
Relates student activities to lesson objectives.
Allows adequate practice without penalty of given skill.
Elicits overt (observable) behavior in all students in order to check for understanding.
Monitors and, if necessary, adjusts instruction based on student feedback.
Provides or elicits summary of the learning.
Provides an opportunity for students to practice the learning.

Interpersonal Skills

- Establishes relationship with students, colleagues and parents which is based on mutual respect and acceptance.
- Shares responsibilities, ideas and resources for the common goal of assisting pupil growth.
- Is flexible and cooperative with colleagues, administrators, parents and students.
- Is accessible to students and parents.
- Promotes positive self-concept in students.

Professional Qualities/Personal Traits

- Exhibits positive attitude towards profession.
- Demonstrates proficiency in written & oral communication.
- Keeps abreast of new developments in educational field.
- Evaluates own performance.
- Is receptive to constructive suggestions.
- Maintains good grooming & personal care.

Knowledge of Subject Matter

- Demonstrates a knowledge base for subjects taught.
- Maintains up-to-date knowledge of relevant scope and sequence.
- Demonstrates an enthusiasm for subjects being taught.

Management

Classroom

- Establishes clearly defined behavior standards which are appropriate for the developmental stages of students.
- Models appropriate behavior standards.
- Consistently applies reinforcement theory, taking individual needs into account.
- Establishes and implements efficient and effective classroom routines.

Physical setting

- Organizes physical setting to facilitate desired instruction.
- Organizes student groups which promote good working relationships.
- Maintains orderly, safe environment.
- Utilizes appropriate materials and equipment.
- Promotes and maintains a positive environment conducive to learning.

Other Responsibilities

- Completes plans, reports, records, and requisitions timely, neatly and in a professional manner.
- Demonstrates responsibility in meeting time requirements of the contracted teaching day.
- Performs non-instructional duties as requested (e.g., recess, hall, detention, study).

GOAL SETTING

Both the supervisor and the staff member have a responsibility to make the goal setting conference as productive as possible. The supervisor, while still maintaining ultimate responsibility for the final product, must actively involve the staff member in the conference. In most instances the final goals should be the outgrowth of a cooperative activity. (In working with non-tenured staff, the supervisor will normally assume a more directive role in goal setting. With tenured staff, the supervisor's major functions would tend to be as a clarifier and a facilitator. Obviously, in those few instances where agreement cannot be reached, the supervisor does maintain final responsibility.) The staff member and the supervisor have the responsibility of coming to the conference prepared to openly and positively discuss those areas that are of particular concern and interest to them. Both parties share the responsibility of approaching the conference and the entire activity with a positive attitude and a willingness to fully participate. By both parties being willing to view the process as a growth oriented, cooperative venture, the success and usefulness of the system is significantly enhanced.

Number of Goals

The number of goals established between the staff member and the supervisor is less important than the form and substance of the goals. In most cases, the number would range between one and three, with the number being determined by the relevancy and the time and energy required.

Measurability of Goals

Several of the options for measuring progress towards the goals are outlined in the procedures (section b, Appraisal Period) in the Teacher Appraisal System. The key to this activity during the conference is a cooperative effort between the supervisor and the staff member in arriving at a method that fits each goal: Certain goals may be so unique that they force the supervisor and staff person to creatively design a method for assessing progress. This is perfectly acceptable. It is to be remembered that subjective judgments made by the supervisor and the staff person after the method(s) have been applied are clearly acceptable forms of measurement. This allows us not to have to confine our goals to only those things that are measurable by traditional, empirical standards. Goals may be accomplished in less than a year. They should be an on-going process. As a goal is achieved, another one may be established. A goal may also be carried over to the succeeding year. Each goal should have designed timelines with key steps outlined.